



GENERAL FACULTIES COUNCIL MEETING #551.1

Approved Minutes

Monday, January 25, 2021

3:00 p.m. via Zoom

Present: M. Mahon, (Chair), C. Adams, K. Alexander, R. Barendregt, L. Barrett, J. Blum, S. Bubel, N. Buis Deering, P. Cardozo, L. Connel, B. Cummins, J. Cunningham, C. Currie, A. Darda, J. Diaz, J. Dobbie, L. Elias, I. Genee, K. Godfrey, E. Greidanus, M. Helstein, B. Hughes, M. Ingraham, D. Jarvie, P. Kellett, L. Kennedy, H. Kletke, I. Kovalchuk, J. Laurendeau, R. Lee-Thai, M. Letts, R. Lindblad, L. Litchke, C. Loewen, M. Magnuson, R. Marynowski, K. Massey, C. Mattatall, M. Mohajerani, C. Nicol, E. Okine, T. Oosterbroek, R. Parkkari, T. Patel, K. Peacock, E. Pullan, G. Pyle, N. Rebry, J. Rice, J. Sheriff, S. Spenceley, L. Spencer, R. Stark, A. Stewart, M. Stingl, A. Taylor, J. Usher, J. Vokey, N. Walker, P. Wilson, S. Wismath, R. Wood, R. Yalamova, L. Zink

Regrets: K. Gillespie, H. Gray, Y. Li, A. Novello, P. Shao, C. Steinke, D. St. Georges

Other: J. Gallais, V. Grisack, M. Whipple, S. Allen, J. Asselin, O. Awosoga, G. Bonifacio, L. Burckes, J. Copeland, S. Das, L. Devitt, A. Elafros, N. Eva, S. Findlay, N. Freiheit, E. Galway B. Gerwin, D. Gill, R. Graham, M. Greenshields, J. Harding, T. Harrison, P. Hayes, H. Jansen, D. Johnson, H. Kharaghani, S. Lenon, A. Luczak, D. MacArthur, J. MacKenzie, B. Marthiensen, J. Mather, K. McGeough, A. McMeekin, D. Miller, H. Mirau, R. Mueller, J. Newberry, J. Nugent, D. O'Donnell, S. Olson, C. Povey, O. Rodriguez, J. Sanders, E. Scott, A. Siaroff, D. Smither, R. Sutherland, C. Takeyasu, A. Tennant, R. Trillia, R. Westlund, C. Williams, J. Young, J. Youngdahl, A. Zovoilis

Oki. The President opened the meeting with a welcome and the Territorial Statement. M. Mahon reviewed the GFC Bylaws with regards to observers. J. Gallais informed members on the new voting process since Zoom has made changes to the yes/no buttons. A request was made that all guests rename themselves to Z Guest to distinguish them from GFC members.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: gfc.2021.01.01
Rice/Zink

That the Agenda for the special GFC Meeting #551.1 held Monday, January 25, 2021 be approved.

Motion: Carried

M. Mahon indicated that he is looking forward to a collegial discussion. These are remarkable times that we are facing. There is lots of angst as we move forward but his sense is that we all have the best interests of the university at heart. We are as focused on hearing as many people speak as possible so we will let everyone speak and then you may have a chance to add a second comment. The challenges we face are significant and there is a balancing act in which we need to give voice to opinions but in the end we are forced to balance the budget and to do that the institution must make difficult decisions.

2. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

2.1. Transformation – Budget Task Forces & Independent Consultation Committee/GFC Consultation Process

The President turned the floor over to N. Walker and E. Okine. Together they gave a PowerPoint presentation on the 2021-2022 budget process and GFC Input (The presentation is attached to these minutes). The Provost gave an outline of their presentation including the role of GFC and the concerns raised by GFC as they understand them. N. Walker went through the established budget process. We must submit a balanced budget to the Board of Governors. The president has the penultimate authority before it goes to the board. GFC reviews the budget and makes recommendations which are brought forward to the board who make the ultimate budget decisions. E. Okine stated that none of the budget process has been altered but the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) has added additional consultations for the university community. There were 23 consultations with individual employee groups, faculty councils, GFC, University community, etc. In those consultation sessions we outlined what we were facing and asked two questions – are there any sacred cows and what changes would you make if you were in charge. A number of town halls have occurred in the last two years. The budget website was updated with any questions that were asked at town halls and the answers from senior administration. The taskforces are advisory to BAC with the reports funneling through the Independent Consultation Committee (ICC) for consultation who will report directly to BAC. All GFC processes within the approved budgetary structures remain the same. There was never any intent of excluding GFC in the budget discussions or recommendations. What we have been hearing is the overall concern that given the extraordinary budget challenges within the budget process, there is not enough consultation with GFC prior to GFC making recommendations to the Board. The focus of today's discussion is how we move forward. We are looking to keep the taskforces and ICC in place but we are open to more consultation with GFC. One solution we heard from GFC Executive was to have special GFC meetings in addition to regular meetings to ensure appropriate time and opportunity for robust discussions.

A. Tennant gave members an overview on confidentiality, privacy and respect for those employees that may/are affected by the recommendations that may come forward. She has heard concerns that some of the budget consultation is being limited because of confidentiality issues. She reiterated that in some cases it can be illegal to share some of this information. For example, we cannot publicise salaries (unless required by legislation) or work evaluations. This information is only available to management who are making the decisions. These processes are set out in our agreements which lists who needs to be involved in them. Some issues must be discussed with the unions first before any information is given

out. There is much anguish on campus right now. There are a growing number of employees on campus who have lost their jobs or are worried about losing their jobs. We need to treat them with dignity and respect while having a safe work environment. It is important to A. Tennant that we maintain confidentiality because our people define our university and are our greatest strength.

M. Mahon informed the committee on the discussion at GFC Exec where they discussed that special meetings of GFC were a potential avenue for meaningful discourse. The President then opened the floor for discussion.

A number of concerns were brought up regarding the redaction of information in the task forces' terms of reference. It was explained that the redactions were related to specific potential losses of positions or were related to negotiation items, and that there were roughly only four places that were redacted. N. Walker stated that if there were implications on employment positions, we had to maintain confidentiality on those positions. One redaction on page 17 was mentioned that it could not be tied to a position so why was it redacted. A. Tennant responded that this redaction is related to a collective agreement. There was concern in balancing confidentiality with meaningful consultations. The Vice-Provost mentioned that there is some timing involved in this confidentiality – some recommendations will not be accepted, some need to go to the employee groups first and then brought forward. This brought about a discussion on timelines. If the budget is due in March, how does the information flow if we are needing to make these cuts quickly? Are some decisions tied to March 31st and others may be longer term? N. Walker stated that they initially had rose coloured glasses on timelines for April 1, 2021 but are now working on plan B and are hoping that we can implement the recommendations in the next two years. The President stated that projections in terms of reductions are at least for the next two years. The long-term need is to look at a viability prospective that this process will evolve over the next few years.

GFC members expressed concern that much of the membership on these taskforces is homogenous, with the majority of members part of senior administration. There was discussion on how to get GFC members involved with some asking senior administration to come up with solutions and on the other side, how GFC members could come up with a solution. There was a robust discussion on the desire to change the reporting path of the taskforces and ICC to GFC instead of BAC. E. Okine reiterated that the taskforces were a conduit to get information to BAC as extra consultation. N. Walker stated that the BAC is an advisory committee for the president as he brings forward the budget to the Board of Governors for approval. There was support of more consultation. The budget involves all employee groups including those that are not GFC or faculty groups. The ICC has been staffed and there have been terms of reference developed. The draft reports from task forces have not all been completed yet. The budget impacts the entire university. It was suggested that the Independent Consultation Committee report to GFC and a motion was suggested to create an ad hoc committee that has similar duties to ICC and reports to GFC. A point of order was raised and the President ruled in favour that the motion should go through the normal GFC process where it goes to GFC Executive to be developed and then to GFC as a formal motion and with supporting information.

MOTION: gfc.2021.01.02
Cummins/Genec

That GFC continue the GFC Meeting #551.1 past 5:00 p.m.

Motion: Carried

After much debate amongst GFC members, the wording for a formal motion to refer to a committee was agreed to by the mover/seconder and put forth for a vote. An anonymous vote was requested and after some dialog, it was decided that a poll would be created in Zoom to do the vote.

MOTION: gfc.2021.01.03
Spencer/Taylor

That GFC Executive bring forth a recommendation for action by GFC to strike an ad hoc committee whose mandate is analogous to that of ICC, but can make independent recommendations on its own.

Motion: Carried (13 opposed)

Clarity was asked for on the nature of GFC approval. E. Okine replied that based on the input of the recommendations, which fall under academic, which are administrative and which are financial? Any that fall on academic side would definitely come through GFC for approval. M. Mahon suggested that we have to consider the direction the decision takes based on the recommendations brought forward. We are dictated by GFC Bylaws, *Post-Secondary Learning Act* (PSLA) and by the Board of Governors. It was noted that in the PSLA, the powers of GFC are subject to the authority of the Board of Governors. The point that bicameral governance is based on the respect of authority of the Board and GFC. Since M. Mahon has been president, the governing bodies have had a good working relationship between them.

3. ITEM FOR INFORMATION

3.1. GFC Executive Committee Report – January 18, 2021
Received as information. No questions raised.

4. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: gfc.2021.01.04
Blum/Cummins

That the GFC meeting #551.1 be adjourned.

Motion: Carried